

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) has won key approval of federal funding for area energy and water projects. The Fiscal Year 2009 "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act" includes \$15,323,000 requested by Buchanan for projects to reduce flooding of Wares Creek, improve navigation of Manatee Harbor and Tampa Harbor, enhance our natural resources, and invest in the energy needs of his constituents.

The House Appropriations approved Buchanan's request of an additional \$7.6 million for the Wares Creek dredging project to help reduce flooding that has plagued the Bradenton neighborhood. Last year, Buchanan secured nearly \$4.7 million for this important public project.

"For decades, sediment build-up in Wares Creek has disrupted the flow of water causing storm flooding of near-by property and making life miserable for the people who live in this neighborhood," said Buchanan. "Since 1986, the residents of Wares Creek have been patiently waiting for government to fulfill its promise to provide much-needed flood protection. This funding will help the state, county, and local officials to dredge the creek, which will reduce annual flooding, save thousands of dollars in damages, and improve the quality of life for area residents who have experienced significant hardship."

Manatee County Lands Management Director Charlie Hunsicker, "This federal tax dollar re-investment in our community comes at a very opportune time as we draw close to obtaining the State permits we need to commence construction. Once again Congressman Buchanan is working directly for the interests of Bradenton residents who look to the Corps to relieve flooding losses and property damage from the all too frequent, large scale flooding of Wares Creek. Without the Congressman's priority support, this project simply could not be built."

"I could not be happier with the appropriation," said Bradenton Mayor Wayne Poston. "We have been trying to get this done for more than 20 years now. I would like to thank the Congressman for all of his hard work. Since the first day he took office, he has been more than willing to work with the City of Bradenton. This is just an example of that partnership."

"I am thrilled with this news," said Bradenton City Councilman Patrick Roff, who represents the Wares Creek neighborhood. "I would like to thank all of the members of Congress who have kept this project on the front burner."

Buchanan also won approval of \$1 million for a renewable/alternative energy center in Sarasota County.

"Sarasota County is an established national leader in energy efficient practices," said Buchanan. "With this funding the county will partner with the federal and state governments, universities and the private sector to construct a zero-energy LEED Platinum certified green building to house the center. This collaboration will promote the application of alternative energy technologies and contribute to the future sustainability of our state and nation."

"In addition to the economic development potential that a new energy future creates, we are committed to addressing the issues of climate change, energy independence and energy affordability at the local level," said Shannon Staub, Sarasota County Commission Chair. "Congressman Buchanan's efforts are a recognition that you have to think globally and act locally."

The freshman lawmaker also secured \$157,000 in the bill for Lido Key beach renourishment.

"Coastal erosion has been a long-term, persistent problem on Lido Key, threatening commercial and residential structures as well as public infrastructure," said Buchanan. "A significant portion of this erosion is, in fact, caused by New Pass, a federally-maintained channel which interferes with the natural long shore movement of sand. This funding will help maintain this local gem for enjoyment today and in the future."

"We here in Sarasota are very appreciative of our Congressman's efforts on our behalf," said city commissioner Richard Clapp. "Lido Beach is one of the jewels of Sarasota and the passage of this funding will help preserve this wonderful asset. Not only does Lido Beach provide recreational and scenic benefits but also provides protection to the adjacent structures and roadway and it is critical to Sarasota economy. The city has been working diligently for years to make this project a reality and is very pleased with the approval of this funding."

The energy and water funding bill includes another \$2,541,000 sought by the 13th District Congressman and Congresswoman Kathy Castor (FL-11) for maintenance dredging at Port

Manatee. Last year, the freshmen lawmakers secured \$2.7 million for maintenance dredging.

“Port Manatee is one of Florida’s largest deepwater ports and an economic engine that continues to grow in revenue and cargo,” said Buchanan. “Harbor maintenance dredging is critical to the Port’s continued success and its economic impact on the County and the region.”

“Congressman Buchanan understands how important maintenance dredging is to the success of Port Manatee and to the community it serves. This funding helps preserve the \$2.3 billion annual economic impact the port has on Manatee County and the surrounding region, and for that, the entire port community is grateful for the congressman’s leadership.” David McDonald, Port Manatee executive director.

The bill also includes an additional \$600,000 Buchanan, Castor and U.S. Rep. Bill Young (FL-10) requested to study the need for improvements to the Tampa Harbor in order to meet projected increases in international commerce. Last year, the lawmakers secured \$132,840 to study improvements which will benefit the region.

Buchanan, Young and Congressman Connie Mack (FL-14) secured committee approval of an additional \$3,325,000 for maintenance dredging of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The Congressmen secured \$1.2 million for the project last year.

“The waterway runs through six counties from Hillsborough to Lee and links natural deep-water sections of bays through a series of man-made channels,” said Buchanan. “This funding will help ensure the safe passage of commercial goods, and access to commercial fishing grounds.”